

Serial No.: 10/656,926

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the Office Action dated August 12, 2004. Claims 1 and 6 have been cancelled without disclaimer of or prejudice to the subject matter contained therein. Claims 3-5 and 10 have been rewritten in independent form. Claim 2 and 7-9 have been amended to depend upon new independent claims 3 and 10, respectively. Claims 26 and 27 have been added, which correspond to claim 2 but depend from new independent claims 4 and 5, respectively. Claim 23 has been amended to include the subject matter from allowable claim 10. Claims 11-22 and 24-25 remain unchanged from versions previously presented.

CLAIM 1 REJECTED UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, however, this claim has been cancelled rendering this rejection moot.

CLAIMS 1, 2 AND 6-8

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,971,163 to Trombley et al. [hereinafter "Trombley et al."]. However, claims 1 and 6 have been cancelled and claims 2 and 7-8 have been amended to depend from allowable claims 3 and 10, respectively, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

CLAIMS 9 AND 23

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Trombley et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,283,838 to Blake et al. [hereinafter "Blake et al."]. However, claim 9 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 10 and claim 23 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 10. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is therefore respectfully requested.

CLAIMS 3-5 AND 10

The Examiner objected to claims 3-5 and 10 as being dependent upon a rejected claim, but indicated these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicant has amended

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claims 3-5 and 10 to be in independent form and to include all of the subject matter of the base claim. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to these claims is therefore respectfully requested.

CLAIMS 11-22 AND 24, 25

The Examiner's finding that claims 11-22 and 24-25 are allowable is gratefully acknowledged.

CONCLUSION

The Applicants respectfully submit this application is in condition for allowance and request issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

In the event the prosecution of this application can be efficiently advanced by a phone discussion, it is requested that the undersigned attorney be called at 703-435-9390.

FEES

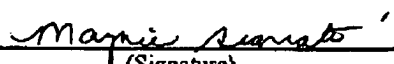
If additional amounts are due following the amendments made to the claims above, or for any other reason, it is respectfully requested that the PTO charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to the deposit account Mayer Fortkort & Williams PC, Deposit Account, #50-1047.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: December 14, 2004

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<p align="center">Certificate of Facsimile Transmission</p> <p>I hereby certify that this correspondence and any document referenced herein is being sent to the United States Patent and Trademark office via Facsimile to: 703-872-9302 on <u>December 14, 2004</u>.</p> <p align="center"><u>Marjorie Scarian</u> (Printed Name of Person Sending Correspondence)</p> <p align="center"> (Signature)</p>
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